

VALENTINE'S DAY EDITION

THE BELL RINGER

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Frank Deford Creates A Stir Around Campus

by KEVIN SEITZ
Associate Features Editor

Frank Deford is called a "sportswriter", but the stat swiping and dramatically sensationalist column the term calls to mind couldn't be further from the writing Deford does so well. Plain and simple Mr. Deford is a storyteller, who has the remarkable gift to illustrate sports and give its personalities meaning and color. Such versatility has gained recognition by the Hall of Fame of the National Association of Sportscasters, recognition as Sportswriter of the Year six times, and GQ who called him simply, "the world's greatest sportswriter."

Standing before the small crowd of parents and adults on Wednesday night with the tall and broad-shouldered build, he delivered a rather animated and enthusiastic speech on the various aspects surrounding the interaction between education and sports. His recurring and ever-important theme is present at any institution where the two mix, and was especially pertinent at MBA, where the two are so powerful and therefore inevitably collide.

While so many (including Joe Lhrmann who spoke earlier this year) have taken a powerful stand on the evils of competitive athletics, Deford approached the

"peculiar institution of the United States" with a balance, naming the problems in our society and recognizing that so much of sports is inherent human nature and has grown entrenched in our way of life.

In Thursday's assembly he spoke again giving a very similar speech, but with many of the elaborations and longer stories removed to accommodate for the shorter time allowance. He directed a great deal of attention to the way in which educational institutions have come to treat sports with athletic scholarships, and he emphasized that if such were cut from colleges, the entire system of obsession over athletics from the lowest levels through to college would be drastically reduced. However, he spoke about the "tennecare" of cooperative competition with great optimism, praising the teamwork involved in all cooperative productions, be it in arts or on the field, because "there is so much sweat about that sweat".

I had a chance to talk to Mr. Deford afterward and ask him more about his personal life, which is often overlooked when most things he publishes are reactionary to the world around him. He grew up in Baltimore attending high school at Gilman, an all-boys prep school not unlike MABA, where he was involved in drama, the literary club,

the basketball team, and served as class president, fondly recalling it as "one of the happiest experiences of my life."

Emerging with the intent of becoming a writer, he then attended Princeton University, and because of convenient timing, he fell into sportswriting as the profession exploded in the media. "I think you have to be yourself as a writer," he said "you can't say, 'well now the people want to hear this so therefore I'm gonna change in some way.' I think once you do that you not only lose all credibility, but you're probably not very good at it."

His staying-power in a field where writers come and go stands to justify his refreshing approach. When asked about the "evil" of masculinity in sports he argued not only that America seems to suffer less from such machismo and delification than other cultures, but also that "it's terrible when boys are somehow taught that it's okay to get out and fight on the field, but you can't cry. You can't care. I mean, I think that's just nonsense, it's terrible, we should have the same ability to cry and care as girls do, that passes



Outspoken sportswriter Frank Deford.

[sic] me off to think that that would be denied me, I'm a very sentimental guy."

It's not every assembly speaker that brings such simple rationality and honesty.

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Timing of Midyear Examinations Examined

by CURTIS LANE
Editor-in-Chief

For decades M.B.A. has held its midyear exams a week or so after the winter holiday break. Annually, for decades, discussion and debate arise in January concerning the advantages of and rationale for the timing of our exams.

Though remaining steady on the calendar, many students are not aware that the exams have undergone some changes over the years. Most significant of these changes date back to the 1980's, when the weight of the exams was lowered from one-third of the semester average to one-fourth.

The rotating schedule appeared more recently, in January of 2002. With this change came also the idea to allow two exams on one day, if the student was studying two courses in the same department.

The Bell Ringer staff spread out during the week after the exams to discover the students' feelings about the timing of exams. Our reporters went to seven advisee groups, knowing that the advisee groups contain a good cross-section of students, from freshmen to seniors, from excellent students to underachievers.

In our sampling the largest number of students by far prefers exams after the break, by a margin of 30 to 14. The seniors

seem to prefer keeping exams in the current spot on the calendar for two reasons: one, during the fall and into December the demands of the college application process are time-consuming and would certainly create a problem if exams fell any earlier, and, two, the relatively unstructured days during exam week provide something of a respite from the routine, not unlike a mini-break, allowing the student to ease back into the rigorous academic day. As senior Will DeLoache notes, "The time we spend to take exams after Christmas is almost like another break. If we put exams before, we would be too rushed."

Sophomore Will Freeman concur, "I prefer (exams) after the holiday. Exams are almost like a break, and by the time they are over, January is over." Freshman and precocious debater Corey Metzman supports the "after-break" exams for three reasons: "We would have to start school earlier (if exams were before the break), and having exams earlier is not worth this price. The two-week break allows us to study some if we want. Exams before the break would be too rushed."

Although the students favoring the

later exam week were a solid majority, some dissenters spoke eloquently their opinion. Senior Joseph Bibb did this group proud with his rather visceral blast, "I want them before (break). I'd like to get them out of the way. I don't care if we start earlier, we'll finish earlier. Besides, starting school two weeks after everyone is a drag. And, also, what the heck is up with graduating in June?!" Junior Aaron Dye in a more restrained manner supports Bibb, "I'd rather have them before the break. Even though there is not an immense pressure to study over break, exams are still in the back of your mind, and this keeps you thinking about school to some degree. Plus, if we started earlier, we would get out earlier, too."

While investigating students' preferences about the timing of the exams, the Bell Ringer asked how much studying was done during the two-week break this year. About two-thirds of our respondents stated an emphatic "None," while the rest helpfully supplied answers ranging from "a little" to "some." Those who did study during the break probably agree with Zach Adkins, who says, "I tried not to do too much and to

enjoy my break, but it was too hard, knowing that I needed to know so much. So, I organized and studied a little bit."

A couple of other questions revealed that the toughest exams were in the A.P. courses, especially Physics and English. Further, the order of the exams seemed fine to everyone, except, many said, optimally either the Arts or Math exams would be in the middle of the week.

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Will Freeman



Joseph Bibb

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The staff of The Bell Ringer prepares all copy, headlines, and photographs at Montgomery Bell Academy. Franklin Web Printing in Franklin, Tennessee, prints the paper.

Frank Deford

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Since he has been writing about sports well over twice as long as I've been alive, I asked him about his favorite sport to watch: "I've always said that baseball is the best game if it's a good game... a good game of baseball is better than a good game of football, is better than a good game of basketball, but it's also true that a bad game of baseball is about the most boring thing in the world... I think you need to have a real connection with baseball... I'm like a fan because I don't cover any games, so when I watch something it's because I want to watch it... like I don't know jack about hockey, but my son loves hockey... and that's really fun for me because I don't know anything about it, I'm just enjoying it..."

Then, with his uniquely broad approach to sportswriting, he has written about and often came to know the greatest names in sports history quite well, including Arthur Ashe, the great African-American tennis player who, by his own personal courage, raised international awareness of the oppressive South African government (apartheid) in his bold stand when denied a visa to play in the Davis Cup

MBA Plans New Buildings

by BROCK BAKER
News Editor

While MBA is already privileged to enjoy some of the prettiest campuses of any high school, the school is always striving to improve the campus. The Board is currently in the later stages of planning for a new round of building and renovation, and the new facilities should benefit every student and help to maintain MBA's position as the premier high school in the Nashville area.

The new plans center around Wallace Hall, which as one of the oldest and least-recently renovated buildings on campus is overdue for an update. When asked about the current condition of the building, students noted the frequent problems with the air conditioning and heating and the

general condition of the bottom floor. "It's just not on par with the other buildings of the school," said senior Paul Knoll, who further added that the planned renovation is a "great idea." Under the current plans, the top floor would be converted into the school's new cafeteria. The ceiling would be opened up to the rafters, and large glass windows overlooking the football field would contribute to the spacious feel of the room. The kitchen and serving areas would be added to the back of Wallace, opening up 6100 square feet of eating area for the students. (Frist Hall, the current cafeteria, has only 2300 square feet) The downstairs would be extensively renovated as well, holding classrooms, students' lockers, and a large multi-purpose room.

The space in the bottom floor of Davis currently occupied by the cafeteria would then be converted into rehearsal rooms, recording studios, and other facilities to host MBA's flourishing musical program. Mr. Gioia noted that with the explosion of MBA students participating in many different varieties of music, it is necessary to build more and better facilities to accommodate those students.

A final part of the proposed plan calls for the debate building to be torn down and a new, three-story academic building to be built in its place. The bottom floor would host the speech and debate program, and the top two stories would contain classrooms similar to those in Carter.

As you can see, MBA is poised to enter a new phase of vigorous expansion and campus improvement. While the stated plans are not yet definite, Mr. Gioia has said that he hopes they will be carried out within the next two years.

Interview With John Turner

by TAYLOR GOULD
Entertainment Editor

What made you start playing oboe and how old were you?

"I started playing the oboe when I was 11 years old. My parents thought it would be a good idea for me to do the oboe because fewer people play that instrument than, say, a violin. Then if I ended up being good enough to apply for a music scholarship, they thought that would give me a better chance. It turned out they were right. I got a full scholarship to my high school in England a few years later."

Have you ever played any other instruments?

Singing seems to come more naturally to me, and it's much more enjoyable."

"I played the piano before I started the oboe, but I gave it up a few years later. I can still play a little but not as well as I used to be able to. I then decided to take up organ lessons because my mom is an organist, and I thought it could be a great way to make some extra cash playing at church, but I quickly gave up on that idea. I've been singing all my life, though."

Oboe or singing, and why?

"Definitely singing. The oboe is hard to play, and it requires a lot of practice and attention, both of which I gave up on as I got older.



John Turner

Midyear Exams Examined

Continued from p. 1

The value of Help Sessions was not overwhelmingly endorsed. Many of those asked asserted that they went to none at all, while others found the sessions marginally helpful. Only about forty percent of those who went to a Help Session found the session helpful.

The Bell Ringer thanks all who participated in this survey, and a special thanks to the advisors who facilitated it.

If any of our readers has more to say on the subject, please e-mail a "Letter to the Editor" to the Bell Ringer.

Fiction Serial

Messengers of Beckoning

Season II, Part IV

by CHRIS PICKENS
Staff Writer

Having just vowed the court of Camelot, Milo Darian stands outside the chamber doors...

A tapping on his shoulder brought Milo around. The small, mousey-looking page who stood before him could not be any older than he, and Milo was suddenly struck with the similarities of this time and his own.

"My greatest of lords," he cajoled, his eyes on the floor, "my majesty requests a private meeting."

"When?" The laughter of the hall was gone from Baal's face, and he returned to the comfortable skin of uncaring intimidation that he wore so well.

"As soon as your lordship wishes to follow..." He glanced uncertainly at Milo. "We shall follow."

Again, Milo found himself being whisked through the passages of the castle, but this time he did not see a place of imagination, but the real people who inhabited it. With greater interest he stared at passing monks, nodded at clanking squires, and smiled at glimmering ladies. It was so like high school that he could barely believe it. Image, attitude, and wealth drove nearly everything he had seen so far. He wondered if the King was the same way. The page pointed at a large door at the end of a nondescript hallway, and shuffled away, his steps echoing as Baal and Milo stood alone before the oak door.

"Now," Baal said, looking at him, glasses shimmering. "He will want to know who and what we are. We must tell him the truth, but not all of it."

"Okay, then why don't you do the talking?" "Because the story involves you."

"All I did was let the rock out." Baal suddenly looked slightly angry with himself, as if he had let something of greater consequence than this hallway spill out. "Be that as it may, he will want to know why you are here. Arthur has always been known to sense truth, so tell it. Other than that, I do not know what to expect. He may reject us, and then it might get dicey." Milo was nodding at all this, but was curious about the door, and what he thought lay behind it. "What about Arthur. Doesn't he need to live?" Baal was silent.

"Let us just see how everything plays out." With this he opened the door.

The first words out of Milo's mouth when his eyes met what was inside the room were, "You have got to be kidding me." A great table stood in the center of a circular chamber. A great painting of the sun lay on its top. The round table.

"It is not a part of the legends," Baal said as he strode to one of the simple, high-

backed wooden chairs at the table and sat. "Arthur really did believe in the equality of all who came to Camelot. Of course, the hard part is getting to this room," he added, waving his hand about.

Milo came to sit beside him. The room was empty, but Milo could just catch the sounds of the great feast somewhere in the distance. "So...are we just going to just tell him."

"Yep."

"Any idea what to say?"

"Nope."

"Good." All Milo knew what he wanted to stay, see the castle. If he was going to be a tool for Baal to use at will, he would at least be a learned tool. There was so much to do and see, how could they simply do their job and leave?

A door in the corner was creaking open. Through the semi-gloom of the chamber, he could tell that it was only one person. Arthur. Alone. He slowly walked to a chair—no different than Milo's and Baal's—and sat. His crown was gone, and he looked tired, but alive, so very alive. For a moment, the three of them simply looked at one another.

"So this..." started Arthur. He had a deeper voice than Milo would have expected. "You are not..."

"What we appear to be?" finished Baal.

"Yes." Milo could feel the curiosity of the man, but could not tell if he was afraid or even suspicious.

"We are here to help you," offered Milo.

"And you are not from...here." The man's eyes now darted to Milo's own. "You are from another time. Perchance that would explain your odd garb?"

"Yes. And we come to save you."

"Oh? From what?"

"A member of the court. It is not important who, but know that he is supposed to be killed. In this...young man's time,"—here Baal indicated Milo—"he is killed, and you live."

Silence met these words. Arthur puffed his hand to his chin. Milo could have sworn he heard the words "what Merlin said..."

But the king recovered and said, "What can I do?"

"Nothing," said Baal sternly. "It is not to be a public battle. We can handle this ourselves. All we need is your promise not to intervene." Baal leaned into the wide expanse of the table. "This is not your time to go..."

Arthur looked at Milo. "And the boy? He is to help?"

Although Milo felt a little indignant about the word "boy," he did not have time to harp on it, for Baal said, "He may be the most important part of this puzzle."

Arthur nodded, getting to his feet. For some reason, Milo had the urge to get up with him, but Baal remained seated, so he didn't. The king did not turn to go to the


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door, but moved around the table to them. At this, Baal did rise, and Milo followed suit. "Go, friends," said Arthur, his eyes placid and smiling. "Do what you must. Duty is a burden that we all must bear." He looked Milo in the eye for what seemed like an hour.

In a whirlwind, Milo found himself being swept down the hall again, Baal at his side. Such was his stupor that he had not even remembered saying goodbye to the king, or even where the two of them were going just now. Baal was talking in his ear...something about looking around, Milo could not tell "...and don't move from there until I get back. If you can, try to listen in on other people's...are you listening?"

"Yes." Milo's monotone mumble gurgled forth. He looked around for Baal, but he had gone. He was standing in a large room, square this time, with one key difference. Books. Hundreds of shelves full of volumes of all shapes and sizes. The dust, the leather bindings, and the stale air came together to create a pleasant, quiet smell. There were no other people around. The small windows at the top of the walls threw dust-speckled beams right to the floor, and Milo walked through them, perusing the library of Camelot.

For what seemed like hours, Milo lost himself. Of course, Milo was a closet reader. If he had been asked back home if he read a lot, he would have shrugged it off with a joke, when in reality, he could not get enough of them. This place was like a holy site, where he could sift through the opinions, ideas, and imaginations of authors no one in his time had ever heard of. Milo walked through the stacks, gently brushing his fingers across the bindings of political, social, economic, and religious tomes. What he really wanted to find, however, would have more than monetary figures, religious hymnals,

and governing advice. It would look something like...Milo stopped at a book simply titled, "Magic and Its Uses." With a reverent tug, he gently pulled the black volume into his shaking hands. Milo could almost feel some kind of power seep through his hands. Or was that his nerve breaking? Without a second thought, he went to open the cover.

The slam of a door brought him back to reality. Panicking, he closed the half-open cover and stuffed it rudely back onto the shelf. He moved to slink deeper into the stacks, hurriedly slipping down through the shadows, moving to where he could see the main area that split up the two sides of the library. On tip-toe, he tried to see through the cracks between the books. Maybe no one had come in at all.

But someone had. He had to backtrack because he almost missed her. She was sitting with her back against one of the stacks, head up, back stiff. Her golden hair, tied in an intricate braid, fell over her shoulder down her flowing blue gown. Her eyes...her eyes were wide and her hands were angrily clutching her knees. Perhaps it was the light, or her eyes, or Milo's mind, or Camelot itself, but after a moment, Milo could feel something tickle his mind. Like there was something wrong with her. Then it hit him. She did not belong. He could almost feel himself being drawn toward her.

"I have bad news about her," said a voice behind him, nearly stopping his heart. Baal's pensive, severe face was staring at her too. He looked troubled, and a little confused. Milo did not know what to say.

"She...she is the daughter of the one we must kill."

"What?" Milo's voice quaked.

"She...she is the daughter of the one we must kill."

Princeton's "Quipfire" Group Ignites Student Interest

by CHRIS PICKENS
Staff Writer

When the improvisational comedy group Quipfire from Princeton University recently came to visit MBA with their show in assembly, excitement could be felt throughout the student body. The previous time a group of this kind had come, two years ago, the students were thrown into a storm of hilarity whose residue lasted for the rest of the year. The Princeton group was also a great success, providing many a good laugh to students and faculty alike. Particularly memorable bits included observations on performance space and, my favorite, an assertion directed at Dr. Crowell about his being a midget.

I got a chance to sit down with the group before the performance to get some insight into what makes improvisational theater so attractive and fun. Many students, while being entertained, do not realize the difficulties and lessons that this type of theater offers. When I asked why they prefer improv to traditional theater, they gave me many responses, both humorous and perceptive. "You don't have to learn lines," was offered right off the bat. However, more serious answers followed, and I really understood what it would be like to focus on this kind of acting. "It is more fun and more real, and there is an emphasis on real life and being a team player." So it follows that there are "no stars" when you have "to get to a group mindset." Then what does it take to

be a good improver? "Honest and open" was the immediate response. What about working with people? Do you work better with people who have been around longer? "There is a level of trust when you are used to the others' styles, but it's another challenge when you think you know what to expect."

The group put their skills to the test in a warm-up exercise with Dr. Fuller's Studio Theater class. I was intrigued at how well MBA students and the Princeton students meshed in terms of improv style. Attention to detail, rapid change, and constant motion were not only observed, but perfected in a game called Freeze, where the players "freeze" the scene to jump in and start a new scene on the spot. The more direct interaction provided me with many new ideas for my own improvisation tactics.

For many people, improv is a mystery of timing and quick thinking. It is also, of course, a fantastic adrenaline rush. Even though some would say that it is an oxymoron to practice for improv, practice, nevertheless, is still required to streamline the relationships the players make among one another to develop the trust necessary for great comedy.

MBA has an improvisational theater group who recently hosted their third "Improv Night" to show off their own skills and raise money for the Theater Department's trip to Scotland this summer. Interested? Talk with me, Derek Pendergrass or Dr. Fuller for more information about practicing and the MBA program. Never done it before? No problem. In addition, I invite all of you to attend upcoming Improv Nights in case you missed this one. There will be one right before we let out for Spring Break, and at least one in the fourth quarter.



(From l to r) Juniors David Buttrey and Jeffrey Zager, senior Paul Knoll, sophomores Dylan Burroughs and Tyler Yarbrough, junior Buck Curley, and senior Matthew Cate.

Congratulations to Jed Crumbo for winning the Big Red Hold'em Tournament. Will DeLoache finished in second place and Eric Beiter finished in third place.



Senior Will Colton performs during MBA's own Improv Night.



The Dude Abides

by KEVIN THOMAS
Staff Writer

How could a movie as quirky and wacky as *The Big Lebowski* have anything to do with MBA and its students? Well, it is set in a bowling alley some of the time, and MBA has an outstanding bowling team. In the movie, there is a group of kids called "The Little Lebowski Urban Achievers," and MBA has its great share of achievers, too, both academic and athletic. Though most of the time students do the right things, sometimes students do the wrong things as well.

Jeff Bridges (*Seabiscuit*), John Goodman (*Raising Arizona*, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*), and Steve Buscemi (*Fargo*, *Reservoir Dogs*) star in this Coen Brothers' hit comedy. Jeff "The Dude" Lebowski (Jeff Bridges) and Walter Sobchak (John Goodman) make many poor decisions that lead to lots of problems in the Dude's life. You most definitely will not want to make the same decisions these two quirky characters make throughout the movie. Some consequences of the Dude's mistakes include getting his car stolen and later burnt to a crisp, being yelled at by the rich Jeff Lebowski, and getting hit in the head by the

L.A. Chief of Police with a coffee mug. He later changes his attitude about everything by saying, "The Dude abides" in the final scene of the movie. Despite making many mistakes, which I will not mention, he finally learns that he should follow the rules of society. Many MBA students follow the Dude's example by receiving demerits for not following the rules of the school. However, their offenses are not nearly as big as the Dude's mistakes. Some common offenses include having no belt, chewing gum, having a shirt tail out, and many more. However, some people at MBA also follow the Dude's shibboleth by not receiving any demerits while at MBA. (This is a hard feat to achieve, but I'm sure that it has been done!) In life, people should always follow the Dude's truism by not breaking the law.

"The Big Red Suburban Achievers" make MBA very proud. There are more National Merit Scholars at MBA than at any other school around. The students are constantly winning awards for their outstanding achievements in debate, art, music, theater, and pretty much every sport you can think of. In the words of the dry, sarcastic Maude Lebowski (Julianne Moore), "And proud we are of all of them." If you are into Creedence Clearwater Revival, and you have not seen this movie, go see it!

Car of the Month: Clay Cooper's 1989 'Rover

by HUNTER BRANSTETTER
Features Editor

In the world of fine automobiles, the names like Shelby and Saleen are revered as gods of their trade—transforming a good car into a great one; now a new name has overshadowed the rest: Cooper. Clay is an artist and his medium is an off-white Range Rover. A veritable Gentleman, Scholar, Athlete of a car, the Rover already combined suave masculinity with rugged durability—a car to drive your date in as you go off-roading, but Clay wasn't satisfied. The car he created speaks for itself.

Aesthetic and Comfort Modifications:

Sickly cream color; sheepskin seat covers; dog bars in the back; light guards; it had a regularly installed brush-guard; then a brush-guard that attached to the hood, and now has no brush-guard (it is not manly to fear brush); "removable" door panels (except for the driver side, where the panel is missing); no working locks or windows; no center console; nothing electric in the interior works; no wipers; no horn; no blinkers; no cup holders; no right headlight; a sunroof that won't open; no a/c or heat; and a clock that is a real clock with hands (to show how cultured Clay is), but it doesn't work either.

Performance Modifications:

2" Body Lift; "custom" catalytic converter; full-time 4WD; steering wheel that is half a rotation off; no muffler; tires with zero treads; no power steering; a hole in the gas tank (it gets 8 mpg on a good day, 6 with the hole); a radiator that overheats after about 30 minutes and requires a solid 5 minutes of cooling time; and a radiator light that is always on.

Performance Wreckard:

4 full-fledged wrecks (in two of them the other car was totaled); 2 more minor accidents; all by Clay.

The modifications to this precision machine and its impressive record have all been exclusively Clay's doing. Even the thrifty man, Clay purchased the car when its blue book value was \$5000 for \$2900 after haggling the seller down from \$3500; the automobile is currently valued at roughly two million dollars or an EZ-Bake Oven. When asked how he managed to drive without a headlight and maintain his license after four accidents, Clay replied, "I don't know, dude. I just get away with it."



The exterior of Clay's Range Rover shows the effects of four wrecks.

Thoughts on Our Last Semester At MBA

by CLAY COOPER
Sports Editor

To the class of 2005: We're almost there. With just a few months of high school left, we can taste graduation, college, adulthood. Undoubtedly all of us look forward to getting our diplomas and taking the next step in our lives, and with good reason. We have worked obscenely hard for our education, and we all deserve whatever reward it will bring. I hope you all enjoy life after MBA as much as I think I will. But before you do, I ask you to take a minute and reflect on the past four years.

In the fall of 2001, 120 or so boys came together to begin their time on the hill as both friends and strangers. The common MBA experience brought us closer; over four years in which all of us failed physics tests, got no sleep on theme nights, made up for that lack of sleep in third period, etc., it was inevitable that we would form friend-

ships within our class as strong as any we might have. We helped each other study, learn, and laugh just enough to get by. Together we broke lights in the locker room, windows in the gym, and the record for the most milk consumed in one lunch period. Undoubtedly every one of us has been either fleshpiled or taped at some point. We earned both our awards and our demerits and wore them with the pride of an accomplished student. We suffered losses together that we could not bear alone, and were stronger for it. Believe me when I say that as seniors now, we are as close as a small group of 18-year-old young men can possibly be.

So as you move on later this year to new surroundings, where you will make new friends and have new adventures, keep in mind the friends you had at MBA, both close and casual, and the unique experiences that make this school and especially this class special.

The Coolest of the Cool

by ALEX MCGUFFEEY
Staff Writer

You may be asking yourself, "Why would anyone write an article about water fountains?" Normally this would pose a very good question, one that would be difficult to answer. However, at a school as demanding as ours, with a campus as expansive as ours, it is very important to know both the location and quality of water fountains around MBA. (Note that this article is entirely based upon my opinion, and should probably not be taken seriously.)

Let's begin with Ingram. I found that the water fountains (I think there are 3) here all have a slight metallic taste. While this makes sense, since it is the science building, and there are, without a doubt, innumerable liters of chemicals and metals poured down the drain in lab periods each day, I would suggest that you quench your thirst before your science class. The water fountains in Wallace are cold and refreshing, but

both have unique oddities: the one on the lower floor smells distinctly of fish and the taller of the two on the top floor has a tendency to shoot its contents several feet into the air upon occasion. Both the Library and Davis water fountains are perfectly fine (though it would be nice to get a water fountain in the basement of Davis). Massey's water fountains, I think, are the best on campus. While I have not visited this building for several months, I remember being almost unable to pry myself away from the fountain on the second floor.

A basic complaint I have with all of the water fountains on campus is that whenever somebody uses one of the water fountains, the one right next to it hardly works until the other has stopped being used. Also, after several seconds of cool, crisp water, most fountains randomly decide to switch to their supply of lukewarm water. While this may save water by deterring students from actually drinking their fill, it is pretty annoying. Now all we have to do is to convince the school to get some Gatorade fountains.



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Juniors Write "Modest Proposals" For MBA

Editor's Note: These are written in the spirit of Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal" and are meant to be satirical—they are not literal.

A Modest Proposal For Advisory Meetings

by JEFFREY ZAGER
Staff Writer

If there is one thing vital to the successful development of a young man, it is the continual guidance that he must receive. It is scientifically proven that 78% of individuals receiving guidance become millionaires. On the contrary, 100% of those individuals not receiving guidance end up in prison. That being said, this guidance is absolutely necessary in order to mold these young men into the gentlemen of the future.

Each of the 660 students at MBA is in a position to receive guidance from his advisor every single day, thus maximizing potential income and minimizing potential prison time. Every morning from 7:50 until 7:55, advice is freely handed out. On special occasions, an additional 30 minutes of advisory period is dedicated to the betterment of our integrity. But these brief, fleeting moments cannot possibly cover everything that I need to know. I often find myself perplexed and dumfounded when faced with situations that my advisor has not yet discussed. Therefore, a change, no... a revolution is in order.

I shall now humbly propose my own thoughts. I have been assured by a very knowing member of the Princeton University

A Modest Proposal For MBA's Motto

by ERICH HAGEMEYER
Staff Writer

MBA faces challenges about money, power, football, and the shortcomings of the gentleman, but I say our single greatest problem as a school is none of the above. In fact, our crisis is much more tightly-knit into our community than any of these. Many have noted MBA's chilling trend toward intellectualism and the proliferation of high thinking among a cabal of sickeningly motivated students. This drive, this Jones of the opium zombie, that transforms otherwise normal young men into book-sick junkies has poisoned the wells of our fine institution for too long! We must halt this charge at all costs, for MBA's sake and for the sake of tomorrow's youth, whom we must save from such intellectual pitfalls.

Surely it is common knowledge by now the harms and general malfeasance these zealous scholars pose to our community. The immediate harm is apparent in our daily routines. Because of whom must we toil till the small hours of the night on mundane explorations of the mind? Because of whom does the standard for excellence surpass what is reasonable? Who has said to the bar "be set high, so that I might flaunt my skills and vanquish my enemies with my brainwaves!" What arrogance! What nefarious purpose! This conniving assailant, this intellectual, has duped our school into the pursuit of meaningless trivia. He has denounced *Sports Illustrated* in favor of Shakespeare; he has chosen philosophy over football! It is for this reason that I ask, why does our institution tolerate this individual?

I propose then, in the name of expedience and practicality to the end of saving our academy, a short list of petitions. First, it is of utmost importance that we strike that grotesque epithet "Scholar" from our motto (and put in its place, of course, "Athlete"). It is obvious the harm of enabling the kind of reckless learning these miscreant intellectuals practice; therefore, our administration must be held accountable for the execution of my primary aim: the punishment of intellectuals by forced labor and demeaning duties.

In truth, MBA has no use for highly motivated students in its academics; however, there may yet be hope for their existence elsewhere. We are aware that they raise the academic standards and (directly or indirectly) create work for their poor comrades. These creatures have an addiction to meaningless labor under the guise of "learning," which hurts us all. What would truly serve the community would be a program that sets the natural order of students, expedites their mundane studies by eliminating the frustrations of a challenge, and saves the school what I estimate to be millions of dollars in outside labor costs. In the spirit of retribution, I say create work for the intellectuals! Put them to work in the kitchen, gardens, restrooms, and anywhere he may actually serve the community, instead of the classroom, where he flaunts his useless skills.

Why hire others at costly salaries to perform menial tasks when we have such a rich supply of potential labor already at our disposal? Put the shovel in the hands of the intellectual! Replace his left-wing rag with a

Continued on p. 7

books, magazines, etc. with any positive reference or mention of gays be immediately banned so that our children can be saved from their evil rhetoric. The poison these gays have been using to brainwash our children to believing that men having sex with each other is acceptable can be found in many different places and even MBA's motto: "Gentleman, Scholar, Athlete." Let me say that again, "GENTLEman." Yes, it appears that the queens have infiltrated our

Continued on p. 7

A Modest Proposal For School Athletics

by SCUFFY MCGEE
Staff Writer

Isn't it a shame to see high school students rush to the parking lot to flee campus the instant the clock strikes 3:10 P.M.? It is the only exercise these kids get all day: rushing to their cars to beat the parking lot traffic. Can't they stick around campus and do something productive for themselves and, much more important, for the school, like playing football or working out?

There are about 450 students in the MBA high school and about a third of these students do not do a sport after school. Instead they debate or go home. The insanity!

I propose we drop our academic curriculum entirely so these lazy sacks can learn what it means to compete. And by exercise I propose we bring them in at 6:00 A.M. before the sun is up and have them do up-downs in the dewy grass while sprinting on command. This routine will provide an adequate warm-up to get their heart rates flowing a bit. After an hour of light sprints and up-downs, we will force feed them pure protein to build strong muscles.

Then, to provide mental activity, with useless subjects like math, science, English, history, or foreign language out of the way, we will study football film to prepare our young scholars for life. Then after a substantial two-hour film session, we will enjoy a brief two-hour lift followed by lunch. Lunch will consist of another serving of protein, for it is the only important food group, with a side of Anabolic-androgenic, also known as "Big Red steroids."

Following lunch we will have a concise four-hour practice to display and perfect our newly-acquired strength and knowledge. After practice a short lift and run should provide sufficient exercise for the day. Following our mild exercise, more protein and steroids shall be served for dinner along with a detailed analysis of film before bedtime at 10:00 P.M., a time that will allow for plenty of time to rest up the 6:00 A.M. run the next day.

Let me one mention the fact that MBA wants to build a well-rounded, balanced student-athlete. That attitude gets one nowhere in life and leads to disaster.

A Modest Proposal to Stop Homosexuality

by CLAYTON LAINHART
Staff Writer

To stop homosexuality in America and prevent the further corruption of Heterosexual America

When walking through the halls of my beloved school or strolling down the streets of this great nation, I see men holding hands and kissing in gross displays of public affection. These men go about their daily lives without thinking about their effects on society. Their actions have been converting our children and rendering them useless to society, as well as threatening the sanctity of heterosexual relationships everywhere. I believe that this problem has gone unaddressed long enough, and I plan to eliminate all traces of homosexuality from our culture in order to save our future generations. My proposal to fix this situation calls for immediate action to stop these transgressors and, thereby, increase the country's productivity and morality.

With the homosexual problem as rampant as it is now, we must begin to solve the problem at its source. The gays have been corrupting our children behind our backs for too long. Measures must be taken now to eliminate any and all homosexual propaganda, which has been leading our children astray.

I suggest that all movies, T.V. shows, books, magazines, etc. with any positive reference or mention of gays be immediately banned so that our children can be saved from their evil rhetoric. The poison these gays have been using to brainwash our children to believing that men having sex with each other is acceptable can be found in many different places and even MBA's motto: "Gentleman, Scholar, Athlete." Let me say that again, "GENTLEman." Yes, it appears that the queens have infiltrated our

own school and replaced our manly, heterosexual image with one of weak, tree-hugging, man-loving, Volkswagen-Beetle-driving homosexuals. I suggest a change from the old motto to "Breeder, Scholar, Athlete." This new motto will instill a new sense of manliness and confidence in our students, which will lead to better performance in the classroom and on the playing fields. I further demand that we institute daily pornography viewing sessions for all children from the day they are born until they start school, so that while young they learn the values of pure, Christian, heterosexual relationships. All the males in the videos will be completely blurred out as to prevent the possibility of a child becoming gay. Children should learn that sex should be limited to one man and one woman (or in some cases one man with multiple women), but that two men having sex is clearly unproductive and wrong.

By not allowing two men to have sex with each other we create a situation in which there are more men for every woman to mate with. This will increase the labor force of our country and lead to a stronger economy and a better place on the world market. Also, if our children grow up never seeing anything but heterosexual couples having sex, then they will most definitely follow this example and pursue a heterosexual lifestyle.

The next step would be to teach our children to begin to use more intelligent words such as "fag," "queer," "faggot," "fairy," "fruit cup," and "queen" in substitution for words like "loser," "outcast," "annoying," "idiot," and "moron." The slang of today's youth is far too non-discriminating, and by replacing it with a vocabulary that attacks just one group we can accomplish many goals at once. First, it will make our

A Modest Proposal to Stop Homosexuality

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Children sound much more intellectual because clearly the word "faggot" sounds smarter than "imbecile." Secondly, if we direct our hatred toward one group, then all the idiots, morons, dorks, and nerds will feel better about themselves and gain more self-confidence. Lastly, teaching our kids to use these words will discourage them from wanting to become gay and have everyone hate them.

Finally, let it be known that even though my proposal calls for an end to male homosexuals, lesbians are perfectly acceptable. Lesbians have a vital and important part in our nation's culture and economy. Without lesbians, advertising would be boring. Many businesses would simply not be able to sell their products if it weren't for lesbians. The alcohol industry, for instance, would be devastated. Also, whereas two men having sex is clearly gross, disgusting, and morally wrong, two women having sex is hot, sexy, and perfectly justifiable because in the Bible where it teaches us to hate fags, it never mentions two women having sex as wrong; the Bible says only that two men having sex is unholy.

Many people will try to convince you that gay-hating is immoral or unjust. These people think that equality for all is acceptable and that people should be allowed to love whomsoever they want. Do not buy into their ideas that it's nobody's business whom you love or have sex with; that intolerance and hatred accomplish nothing, or that if people would just take the time

learn about and understand homosexuality then they would realize that there is nothing wrong with it. By looking at the cold, hard facts one can see that these people are obviously wrong:

1. Removing queer propaganda from our culture will allow our youth to grow up the way God meant for them to, as manly men and feminine women, and thus giving them clear ideas of who they should be instead of being confused about their sexuality. This will allow them to focus on more important things during life, such as proving just how manly they are and helping to solve the gay problem in America.

2. By purging our society of homosexuals we increase the work force of our nation by increasing mating. Without gays to steal away men from their reproductive duty, we ensure a constant supply of labor at all times.

3. By focusing all the hatred in our culture's vocabulary toward one group, the gays, we increase the self-confidence of all the previously harassed groups in our country. This way we alienate only one group and free up the others to function in our society.

4. Lastly, by eliminating the vile homosexual lifestyle from our nation, we shall become revered across the world for our courage in standing up against this demonic invasion. The Middle East will finally recognize that we are indeed devout and pious. Germany will respect us for being able to do what they couldn't in the 1940's.

The problem at hand is only going to become worse in the future, and it is up to you, heterosexual America, to stop the gays now and forever save this great nation from becoming an orgy of demons.

A Modest Proposal For MBA's Motto

Continued from p. 6

dish rag! We can punish this scoundrel and beautify the campus simultaneously. And, if by some levitation effort, the intellectuals manage to resist my plan by some extraordinary sophistry (which we know is their great and terrible weapon), I should think of no better end for them than liquidation. A certain Cambodian gentleman executed this solution with frightening success under similar circumstances.

To implement these plans I also propose the immediate exile of all Ph.D.s on campus. Their presence on the faculty is dangerous beyond imagination, given their abhorrence of intellectuals; hence, their elimination would mean a decisive victory.

One has suggested to me that the real problem is not with the intellectual minority, but with the normal majority, who refuse to adapt to the high standards already set by the school. This professor of lies added some nonsense about the benefits of a rigorous scholastic environment that, in the long run, aids and strengthens students. What a doit indeed! If this were true, why would MBA's innocently unmotivated students detest work so vehemently? Suffer no longer, men! We shall mobilize and redress these outrages! We shall claim vengeance on the barbarians!

King Society Inducts New Members

by CHRIS GIOIA
Managing Editor

On Monday, January 24th, the MBA King Society held its second induction ceremony, welcoming 10 new members into the service-based society. Five seniors and five juniors were inducted into the King Society: Eric Bader, Buck Curley, Read Ezell, Ashley Hill, Andy Snyder, Jonathan Cannon, Spencer Cummings, Jack Fakin, Bryant Hahnfeldt, and Barton Sanders. As the candlelight flickered before the student body, old members read the names and descriptions of the new inductees and each proceeded to light his candle. The ceremony and society provide a formal and unique way to represent boys at MBA who have distinguished themselves in the area of service, in and out of school. With its minimum requirement of ten hours of school service per year, the society finds boys who have dedicated much of their time

to the worthy endeavor that service is. All of the new inductees, however, exceed the minimum requirement and show great participation in service outside of school, whether through their church, Boy Scout troop, or other organization.

The ceremony was highlighted by the return of Mr. James Threalkill, former art teacher and Service Club leader at MBA, to give a speech about the King Society and its purpose. Students were thrilled to see him again, since he left MBA to work for Skanska Construction Company after this previous school year. Last year Mr. Threalkill was instrumental in starting the King Society, and his remarks about it proved its value and importance.

An Interview With Mr. Threalkill

by CHRIS GIOIA
Managing Editor

I had a chance to interview Mr. Threalkill after the ceremony and talk to him about his new job and his experiences at MBA.

Mr. Threalkill now is the National Diversity Director for a construction management company called Skanska, the second-largest construction management company in the country. His job is to foster diversity

in the company by locating women and minority business owners and helping them become involved in projects Skanska has. He also manages community outreach for Skanska to increase community fundraising and help its employees get involved in volunteer work.

When asked if he misses teaching, Mr. Threalkill said that he does miss it tremendously because he had a great experience in the classroom and with the MBA service club. He, however, saw his new career as a once in a lifetime opportunity. Mr. Threalkill says that he still can plan and participate in as much community service as he did at MBA, since service is a large aspect of his job.

He also still creates much art and actually has an exhibit soon, and he said that he would never neglect his art because of his job. When I asked Mr. Threalkill if he was pleased to see the King Society, a society which he helped bring about, continue to thrive at MBA, he replied that, "It's really gratifying to see the quality of the King Society and the fact that it has grown to be such a significant part of MBA and its offerings to students." Mr. Threalkill also said that, "It was a great honor to be asked to come back and to serve as the speaker." He felt he did not get to say goodbye properly to many students and teachers last year, and it was nice to come back and see everyone again.

He feels that the King Society and its message give students the opportunity to change society, and he is proud of MBA and its students for continuing to work hard in the community.

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At the Movies With John Rocco: A Review

by JOHN ROCCO
Staff Writer

Hide and Seek

Starring Robert De Niro and Dakota Fanning (*Man on Fire*, *Cat in the Hat*, *Uptown Girls*). This thriller is about a young girl, Emily Callaway (Fanning), who has to cope with the mysterious death of her mother. Her father, David (De Niro), decides to move outside of the city and into the woods. Fanning soon discovers a new imaginary friend, Charlie, who likes to play games like "Hide and Seek." Soon these games turn into murders of anyone who gets in the way. Not only is this movie predictable, there are not too many scary moments except for a few jump scenes. If you are looking for a scary movie, I do not recommend seeing *Hide and Seek*. Lately De Niro has been seen in horror movies like *Godsend* and comedies like *Analyze This*, *Analyze That*, *Meet the Parents*, and *Meet the Fockers*, but I think he should continue to perform in movies like *Goodfellow*, *The Godfather Trilogy*, *A Bronx Tale*, and *Casino*. Overall, *Hide and Seek* is more of a comedy movie with a few scary moments. Rated R for frightening sequences and violence.

In Good Company

Starring Dennis Quaid (*Flight of the Phoenix*, *Cold Creek Manor*, *Any Given Sunday*, *Traffic*), Topher Grace (*Traffic*, *That '70s Show*), and Scarlett Johansson (*The Perfect Score*, *Lost in Translation*). This comedy-drama is about fifty-one year old Dan Foreman (Quaid) who is the head of his company with a beautiful daughter (Johansson) and a pregnant wife, but all of his good luck comes to an end when there is a corporate takeover, and there is a new boss, Tom (Grace), who is only half his age. This movie should deserve more recognition. With many family issues being brought up, I think this comedy should be a family movie. Rated PG-13 for sexual content and drug references.

Assault on Precinct 13

Starring Ethan Hawke (*Taking Lives*, *Training Day*, *Great Expectations*), Laurence Fishburne (*The Matrix Trilogy*, *Mystic River*, *Boyz n the Hood*), John Leguizamo (*Spun*, *Romeo + Juliet*, *Executive Decision*), Gabriel Byrne (*End of Days*, *Sigmatma*, *The Usual Suspects*), and Ja Rule (*Scary Movie 3*, *Half Past Dead*, *The Fast and the Furious*). A young police officer, Jake Roenick (Hawke), who is recovering from a wound through a failed sting operation, runs an old precinct. On New Year's Eve, he and other officers are forced to take care of a few convicts because of the snow. Bishop (Fishburne) is a cop killer who is one of the convicts in Precinct 13. A group of officers led by Marcus Duvall (Byrne) attempts to break into the precinct before morning in order to assassinate Bishop. Although the movie seems to have a simple plot, there are many action-packed moments and scenes with humorous dialogue. It was actually based on the 1970's version directed

by John Carpenter (*Halloween*, *Ghosts of Mars*, *The Thing*). Rated R for strong violence and language throughout, and for some drug content.



Meet the Fockers

Starring Ben Stiller (*Dodgeball*, *Zoolander*, *The Royal Tenenbaums*), Robert De Niro (*Analyze This*, *The Godfather Trilogy*, *Goodfellow*), Dustin Hoffman (*I Heart Huckabees*, *Sphere*, *Rain Man*), and Barbra Streisand. This comedy is outrageously funny. Gaylord Focker (Stiller) visits his parents with his new wife and step-parents. Jack Byrnes (De Niro) attempts to find many flaws in his son-in-law, and Focker continues to provide him examples. *Meet the Fockers* starts off exactly when *Meet the Parents* ends. I thought this movie was just as funny as the first one, and I recommend it to the whole family. Rated PG-13 for crude and sexual humor, language, and a brief drug reference.

Alone in the Dark

Starring Christian Slater (*Windtalkers*, *3000 Miles to Graceland*, *True Romance*), Tara Reid (*My Boss's Daughter*, *Van Wilder*, *American Pie*), and Stephen Dorff (*FeeDotCom*, *Cold Creek Manor*, *Deuces Wild*, *Blade*). This sci-fi movie starts out with an awesome chase scene. The camera work is excellent as well as the special effects. After that one scene, the movie went downhill. Edward Carby (Slater) discovers that one of his friends has died, and he decides to investigate a place called "Shadow Island." He soon finds out that a professor is trying to unleash demons onto the earth. His girlfriend (Reid) and a commander (Dorff) attempt to stop this plot from occurring. This movie is probably as bad as a Vin Diesel movie, such as *The Chronicles of Riddick*, *xXx*, and *The Fast and the Furious*. I do not recommend anyone to see this movie. The so-called demons look very unreal and there is horrible metal music playing in the background when a battle occurs. I thought this movie would be similar to *Pitch Black*, also starring Vin Diesel. Christian Slater and Stephen Dorff made poor decisions by agreeing to act in this movie. Rated R for violence, language, and a scene of sexuality.

Ocean's Twelve

Starring Brad Pitt (*Troy*, *Fight Club*, *Traffic*, *Entrapment*), George Clooney (*Three Kings*, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, *From Dusk Till Dawn*), Andy Garcia (*Confidence*, *Hoodlum*, *The Untouchables*), etc. This drama movie stars all of the famous actors that were in the first one. The gang decides to pull off another heist because Terry Benedict (Garcia) wants his money back. If you have seen *Ocean's Eleven*, you don't need to see *Ocean's Twelve*. The movie was really boring with only one action scene that can be seen on the commercial. I think they should have stopped after the first movie. They tried to place a large number of famous actors into one movie with the hope of it being successful. It worked in *Ocean's Eleven* but failed miserably in *Ocean's Twelve*. Rated PG-13 for language.

White Noise

Starring Michael Keaton (*Jackie Brown*, *Multiplicity*, *Batman*) and Deborah Kara Unger (*Thirteen*, *Payback*, *The Game*). This romantic-thriller movie begins with the death of Jonathan Rivers' (Keaton) wife. He begins to drift into isolation when he finds out that he is able to communicate with the dead. Not only can he see the dead, he also discovers that he can prevent deaths from occurring. This movie definitely had many jump scenes in it, but there was too much romance in the movie to be classified as scary. Overall, the movie was good at the time but I really don't remember too much of it. Rated PG-13 for violence, disturbing images, and language.



Coach Carter



Ocean's Twelve

Starring Samuel L. Jackson (*Shaft*, *A Time to Kill*, *Pulp Fiction*), Robert Ri'chard (*Light It Up*, *Cousin Skeeter*), and Ashanti. This powerfully dramatic movie, based on a true story, moved the entire audience when I watched it. Ken Carter (Jackson) is the new coach of a public basketball team that has won barely any games. The teammates have poor grades and have many serious issues outside of school. Carter begins to shape the basketball team into gentlemen on and off the court. I thought this movie would be slow with a few highlights, but I found out that it was probably the best Samuel L. Jackson movie I had seen in awhile. This movie is one of the top movies to see right now with a family. Jackson's loud and sarcastic attitude, which can be seen in all of his movies, was definitely a plus in this movie. Rated PG-13 for violence, sexual content, language, teen partying, and some drug material.

Darkness

Starring Anna Paquin (*X2: 25th Hour*, *X-Men*). Regina (Paquin) moves to a new house out in the country. Her brother draws pictures of people dying, her father has these massive attacks that occur all of a sudden, and her mother does not pay attention to any of them. Besides having a dysfunctional family, Regina feels that something disturbing creeps in their new home. I thought this movie was an excellent horror movie with a disturbing ending. The movie had a few jump scenes, but many viewers were not satisfied because it really was not all that scary. I loved this movie because it had almost all no-name actors, and the ending was incredible. Rated PG-13 for disturbing and frightening scenes.

Coming Soon:
Hitch - 2/11/05
Constantine - 2/18/05
Son of the Mask - 2/18/05
Cursed - 2/25/05

New "Bright Eyes" Release Lives Up to Hype

by KEVIN SEITZ
Associate Features Editor

At 24, Connor Oberst has found himself thrown from the indie-rock enclave directly into the national spotlight as the frontman and only constant member of the band "Bright Eyes." Leading a rotating band of musicians, Oberst's recent dual-release of *I'm Wide Awake, It's Morning* and *Digital Ash, Digital Urn*, will finally break the band out of its relative obscurity. Named on NPR as "two of the most anticipated records of 2005," the two recent albums indeed had a great deal to live up to with "Bright Eyes'" last 2002 release of *Lifted or The Story Is In The Soil Keep Your Ear To The Ground*, which gained Oberst immense critical acclaim, with its ambitious and sprawling work of dark songwriting. Declared "rock's boy genius" by dedicated fans, Oberst's tremendous voice and often ragged emotional singing were surrounded by acoustic guitars, dusty pianos, and the occasional violin, but Oberst seemed too stubborn to decant his material as the popular music scene demanded. Nevertheless, he found a spot on the Vote For Change Tour of 2004, alongside the touring greats of R.E.M., Dave Matthews, Pearl Jam, and Bruce Springsteen, an honor that indicates Oberst is destined for greatness.

Awake marks an obviously conscious effort in the evolution of Oberst's

personal songwriting as he moves toward simplicity, echoing the country and folk influences of roots-rock that was immortalized by Bob Dylan's *Blood on the Tracks*. The album is largely centered around an accus-



I'm Wide Awake: It's Morning

tic guitar, and the ten tracks are an effort to emphasize the melodies and powerfully simple tune of each song. Oberst's voice too, is far more supple and harmonious (backed by Emmylou Harris and Jim James of "My Morning Jacket"). While *Lifted* found the lyrics standing in the spotlight, "Bright Eyes" deserves credit for having successfully balanced the powerful poetry with the other components, while keeping the words at the forefront. As Oberst recently moved from the American Midwest of Omaha to New York City, a depiction of a truly American mindset evolves: a comfort in being out of place. The clever juxtapositions, enduring storytelling, and memorable lines once again

dive into his themes of the mixed emotions in honesty, death, depression, drugs, and relationships, a task many songwriters would not dare attempt, but one which Oberst attacks with a fearless ambition and in which he feels quite at home. Inevitably, his political views do surface on several tracks, but the "television war" is used more as a backdrop, for it's one we live in today and cannot ignore. "Bright Eyes" has created what will surely prove to be an enduring record, full of the colorful depths of despair and peaks of optimism that only such smooth and simple songwriting can achieve, while still maintaining some of the rougher edges that always set them apart.

The second release, *Digital*, was originally conceived with the purpose of creating an album of beats that "make you bob your head", and the result is a definitely darker album driven heavily by drums, electric guitar, and synthesizers. Oberst had always brought in musician friends to help, but here the music finds itself nearly consumed by them, with Nick Zinner ("Yeah Yeah Yeahs"), Jimmy Bumbarro ("Dntel," "Postal Service") and two members of "The Faint" (an electronica band also from Omaha) among others, each providing their own influence, the result a scattered whole. Each song alone seems perfectly decent, but this album as a whole is far more a great work of studio-experimentation than a great record.

Forever true to their indie roots and small hometown record company, Saddle



Digital Ash, Digital Urn

Creek, "Bright Eyes" fills a unique niche in this evolving pop music scene, lately somehow driven by appearances on Fox's *The O.C.* (whether it mimics the trends or sets them I can't judge). Yet with the immense pop-star popularity Oberst has found in the last three years, which have planted his face onto nearly every music-related publication, it's ironic that he didn't ascend to this point by relentless marketing, but by a group of followers fanatic about his music. Ryan Adams's 3-cd release last year was denounced as a brash and cocky move, but these two were released more or less merely because they could, and therefore they seem to hold some sort of greater hope. Once again, he has proved himself as an artist unafraid in his approach to an honest uniqueness, unafraid to take chances, make mistakes, indulge in excess, and maybe create something amazing in the process.

Compliments of a Friend

From a Member of the MBA Class of '63

Wrestling Team Finishes 4th in State

by BEN BELLET
Staff Writer, Wrestler

As we prepare for the State Individual Tournament, I realize that the MBA Wrestling Team has already had a very challenging and exciting season. The team started off with the leadership of five seniors (Patrick Bradley, Chambliss Shillinglaw, Chris Woolsey, Matt Bubis, and Ben Turk), a small yet capable group. The Big Red wrestlers' first wins were over Stratford, MLK, FRA, and Centennial. After these sound victories, the team headed to Jefferson City, Missouri for the Helias Classic (a dual tournament) with the young men of Father Ryan. The Big Red came up against some very experienced Northern teams who deemed themselves superior to the grapplers of the South. They were quickly relieved of that assumption as the two teams from Tennessee, Father Ryan and MBA, came in first and second, respectively.

After defending Tennessee's honor, the team continued winning with victories over Overton, Hendersonville, and Lipscomb. After these matches, intense Christmas practices began. The first Christmas tournament was the McCallie Invitational, a difficult individual tournament in which MBA placed 11th, with Wes McKeithan placing 4th, Ben Turk 3rd, and Matt Bubis 2nd. Then it was off to the Kenwood Duals tournament in which the Big Red finished with a record of 3-2, the main success-

being their rallying after a loss and defeating Kenwood High School 66-8, whom Father Ryan had only beaten by a few points. After returning to school, the wrestlers beat Brentwood High School. MBA also participated in the Father Ryan Invitational, in which we placed 3rd despite losing Matt Bubis to a concussion earlier. MBA placed above Father Ryan in this tournament thanks to a last-minute pin by Allen Riley, Matt Bubis's replacement. Another starter was lost William Herbert was injured after defeating the number-2 seeded wrestler in his weight class. Placers in the tournament were Elliot Sutter, John Michael Simpson, Patrick Bradley, Justin Hall, Chambliss Shillinglaw, Ben Turk, Allen Riley, and Ben Bellet. After handily defeating Mt. Juliet, White House, and BA, the wrestling team prepared to face a formidable Clarksville team.

Disappointingly, the wrestlers lost to Clarksville in a humiliating match that they could have won. With a rough match against the 3rd-ranked Father Ryan team who had beaten Clarksville coming up in a week, the team was in need of improvement. Luckily, the outstanding leadership of the small number of seniors on the team (now down to four) inspired the wrestlers to turn their discouragement into the will to prepare hard in the coming week for the Irish wrestling powerhouse. With Coach Simpson absent because of a family loss, it was up to the assistant coaches to prepare the wrestlers for the majority of the week of training. Coach Jenkins and Coach McBride's invaluable guidance during this week was soon to be tested on Friday night.

The Fighting Irish came to MBA, ready for a win after MBA's poor performance the week before against Clarksville. Unfortunately for the Irish, they were facing a team much different from the one they had seen the week before. The match started off with yet another discouragement, as Ben Turk was injured in the first match and could not continue, giving Ryan first blood. MBA rallied back with a win by Nicholas Jacques and a hard-fought match by first-year wrestler Michael Sweet. Allen Riley then pinned his 2nd-ranked opponent, Elliot Sutter, giving the Big Red needed encouragement. Elliot Sutter fought a hard match and John Michael Simpson came through with another invaluable pin. Nathan Deutsch, Luke Bellet, Patrick Bradley, Wes McKeithan, and Justin Hall all fought hard, with an inspiring performance by Justin, who wrestled very experienced senior and held his own, losing by only 1 point despite receiving a concussion in the middle of the match. Chambliss and Ben then both scored pins, bringing the score to 33-28, with MBA in the lead. It all came down to Brooks Tate's match, in which Brooks had to avoid a 6-point pin by a very experienced and skillful senior (Tyler Mayo) to allow MBA to win. With much support from an energetic crowd and many close calls, Brooks fought hard for six minutes and emerged unpinned to give MBA a win by one point and the region championship. How did a very young MBA team who had

lost two seniors and three starters beat a seemingly superior team such as Ryan? The answer is simple: outstanding senior leadership, hard work, and (as Coach Simpson puts it) heart.

Over the past weekend, the MBA wrestlers participated in the State Duals in Clarksville. After a solid win over MUS, the team faced a formidable and experienced second-ranked McCallie. Despite some courageous performances, MBA fell to McCallie, but did not allow this to stop them; as this defeat put them up against Ryan the following day. The chance to put the Irish out of the tournament was too sweet for the Big Red wrestlers to resist, as MBA beat Father Ryan once again by an even larger margin than before, reopening previous wounds. Highlights included an unexpected victory by Chambliss Shillinglaw over the second-ranked Tyler Mayo. With this win, MBA gained the right to compete for 3rd place against Notre Dame. Although this match was lost by MBA, the outstanding fight that the young team brought to the match was undeniable, with John Michael Simpson beating a former state champion even after injuring his leg during the match. All in all, the tournament was a success as the very young MBA team asserted its prowess by finishing in 4th place and ahead of teams to whom we had been predicted to lose. The wrestling team now faces the State Individuals on February 18-19. With the same support, work ethic, and determination, we should do very well.

Patriots Win Super Bowl, Become Dynasty

by COLIN BRIER-BRANTON
Staff Writer

The New England Patriots cemented a spot in sports history as one of the first true dynasties of the 21st century as Andy Reid and the Philadelphia Eagles watched their long-awaited chance at a Super Bowl title slip away. Bill Belichick, Romeo Cremel, and Charlie Weiss devised a game plan together for the last time and led the Patriots to a level few teams have reached before.

After L.J. Smith's first quarter touchdown catch from Donovan McNabb, the Patriots responded with adjusted coverage packages and gained the lead from then on by causing multiple Eagles errors and successfully executing their offensive strategy, aside from several stalls inside the red zone. Patriots linebackers and ends dropped into coverage and tested the will of Pro Bowl quarterback Donovan McNabb, forcing McNabb to throw three interceptions. New England consistently negated any momentum gained by McNabb as he was unable to get outside the tackles and was wrestled to the ground repeatedly. Brian Westbrook found similar success behind the talented Eagles line as he broke free for forty-four yards and never found his way into the end zone. Patriots linebacks and ends dropped into coverage and tested the will of Pro Bowl quarterback Donovan McNabb, forcing McNabb to throw three interceptions. New England consistently negated any momentum gained by McNabb as he was unable to get outside the tackles and was wrestled to the ground repeatedly. Brian Westbrook found similar success behind the talented Eagles line as he broke free for forty-four yards and never found his way into the end zone on the ground. New England brought their trademark blue-collar approach to the game and saw their offense run like a properly-constructed machine. Pats wideout

Deion Branch finished with a record eleven receptions for a game-high 133 yards, earning him MVP honors. Terrell Owens proved his determination and accounted for a remarkable 122 yards on nine receptions for the Eagles, even though his cutting ability was obviously limited.

McNabb struggled to find the open man routinely and threw into coverage multiple times after misreading fronts. Belichick relied on Corey Dillon's legs all year and split time between Kevin Faulk and Dillon during the game to keep Eagles players off balance and allow Tom Brady to complete twenty-three of thirty-three passes to seven receivers. Brady guided the Patriots to their thirty-second win in thirty-four contests and can now count on a spot in the Hall of Fame. New England sports fans may just have had the best fall/winter in sports history after the curse was broken by the Red Sox in October and now that the Patriots stand atop Mount Olympus with Zeus and three Lombardi Trophies from the last four years.

After the Eagles took an early lead they were never able to sustain a constant attack on New England without showing signs of fatigue or uncertainty. Even though the Eagles out gained the Pats 369 to 331, they coughed the ball up four times and watched the Patriots take advantage immediately. Two Tom Brady passes found their way into the end zone as David Givens and Mike Vrabel each caught touchdowns in the

The wrestling team poses with its Region Champion plaque after defeating Father Ryan.



red zone. McNabb found Eagles workhorse Westbrook on the sideline for a touchdown pass that tied the game at fourteen. Corey Dillon and Adam Vinatieri produced New England's final ten points as the Eagles fell behind for good. McNabb would find Greg Lewis for a thirty-yard score, giving the Eagles some hope to go on. After a Patriots possession the Eagles received one last opportunity to put a scoring drive together and gain the lead. However, Andy Reid and the rest of the Eagles organization seemed complacent in their efforts to put together a winning drive and wasted valuable clock time, forcing several attempts at the end zone, all ending in despair for Philadelphia fans across the country.

Before the season, the Eagles had signed Terrell Owens, the free agent who was supposed to put them over the top and he helped them dominate NFC opponents during the entire course of the season. Any satisfaction Andy Reid and Donovan McNabb got out of making it to the Super Bowl was swept away by the forces of the greatest sports dynasty of the Twenty-first Century. New England should serve as a model for franchises from now on—only through compromise, hard work, and determination will success come. Bill Belichick has molded the Patriots franchise like the masters of success, and they seem ripe to compete in similar fashion for years to come.



Seniors (l to r) Jay Piirkerton, Joseph Birdsong, and Bryant Hahnfeldt sign National Letter of Intent to play college football at Yale, Wake Forest, and Vanderbilt, respectively.



Seniors (l to r) John Turner, Nick Luna, and Jesse Wright at MBA's *Music In the Round*, held on January 30.



Senior Brenton Harrison shoots a free throw during MBA's 49-48 win over Baylor.

Basketball Prepares for Region Tournament

by CLAY COOPER
Sports Editor

The Big Red basketball team is once again on a roll, just in time to make a run in the region tournament. A second blow-out victory over USN last week and a down-to-the-wire one point win against Rossview has MBA excited and primed for the tournament.

On Tuesday the 15th, the Big Red play host to Mt. Juliet for senior night, the last regular-season home game of the year. Those seniors who will be honored include: Hughes Tipton, CJ Hurt, Jim Beckner, Ter Patterson, Ravi Mishra, Taylor Gould, and Brenton Harrison. A win in this game and one on Thursday against Father Ryan could put the Red in prime position to do well in region, which will be hosted by MBA, and earn a berth to the state tournament.

With an overall record of 13-14 the team has improved steadily this year. Important wins include a defeat of the 3rd-ranked

team in the state Baylor, a double overtime victory over Upperman, and the aforementioned two victories over USN. However, the true test of the team's ability will take place in the region tournament.

"We're excited about region," says Beckner, "and we aren't intimidated at all." Fortunately, luck may side with the Red in the tournament, at least according to the old sports truism that in most situations it is extremely difficult to beat the same team three times in one season. Opponents BA and BGA should pay close attention to this warning, because the Big Red is out to avenge a few hard-fought losses earlier this season.

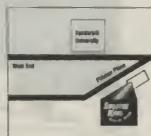
With coach Kevin Anglin undoubtedly hard at work over an effective game plan for the tournament and the players feeling confident, this year's regional contests should be very interesting ones. Come out Tuesday, Thursday, and next week to support your Big Red team and help propel them to victory.

**Congratulations to MBA's
Swim Team, which recently
tied for First in the region
on February 11-12.**

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COMING WINTER 2006...
MBA Winterim



Cartoonist: Caldwell Tanner